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ABSTRACT

This document describes a collaborative program between the English and Business Departments at New Britain High School (Connecticut) designed to respond to the rapid growth of the technological aspects of communication. Three student texts, six videos, two periodicals, and two resource text materials, computer hardware and software used, and a recruiting and project plans are listed. Both one-semester (two-term) courses of study with the business education teacher and the English teacher are outlined. Four appendices are included: (1) State Department of Education common core of learning; (2) summer reading list; (3) business communications reading list (14 listings); and (4) course description. (NLA)

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BUSINESS COMMUNICATIONS COLLABORATIVE
ACADEMIC CROSS-CREDIT FOR BUSINESS EDUCATION CURRICULUM

PREPARED BY
CONSOLIDATED SCHOOL DISTRICT OF NEW BRITAIN
1 LIBERTY SQUARE
NEW BRITAIN, CT 06051

PREPARED FOR

CONNECTICUT STATE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
DIVISION OF VOCATIONAL, TECHNICAL AND ADULT EDUCATION
BUREAU OF VOCATIONAL SERVICES
MIDDLETOWN, CONNECTICUT

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BUSINESS COMMUNICATIONS

State Grant for Academic Cross-Credits
Through Vocational Education

Submitted by
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Elaine Dymczyk, Business Education Department
New Britain High School

Rationale

Written and oral communication is a lifetime skill which is required in any career or profession and for everyday personal use. Since the technological aspects of communication have grown so rapidly, there is a need for a collaborative program between the English and Business Education Departments. Students will have the advantage of the expertise of the teachers in their respective areas and will be able to integrate word processing technology with writing skills.

Objectives

Students will be directed toward the following objectives which were planned in conjunction with the Common Core of Learning (see Appendix A) objectives as proposed by the State Department of Education:

Business Education Department--

1. Write an effective business or personal letter
2. Write an effective short report
3. Format a research paper
4. Develop and increase business and general vocabulary
5. Develop basic writing mechanics
6. Develop decision-making skills
7. Develop pride in professional-looking finished product
8. Practice fundamentals of oral communication

English Department--

1. Adjust reading rate to purpose and level of difficulty
2. Explore ethics of business in novels and American literature
3. Explore the conflicts in such business plays as: All My Sons and Death of a Salesman by Arthur Miller, and Other People's Money by Jerry Sterner
4. Explore the social/ethical problems in such recent films as: Wall Street and Norma Rae

5. Explore the scope of reading materials to include newspapers, reviews, and periodicals
6. Explore communication problems in the workplace, as well as in the community at large
7. Complete appropriate formal papers
8. Follow spoken as well as written directions
9. Explore content of research paper

Student Activities

Business Education Department--

1. Compose original business text
2. Correction or application of punctuation and spelling skills
3. Correct use of basic writing skills: spelling, punctuation, grammar, sentence and paragraph construction
4. Correct formatting of various types of writing projects
5. Job seeking skills: resume writing, letter of application, job interview
6. Oral presentation related to the business field

English Department--

1. Complete a career inventory (Harrison O'Shea)
2. Vary reading rate according to purpose

3. Employ collaborative learning groups (e.g., write up a sales pitch for a product)
4. Read plays aloud--students taking roles
5. Role play social/ethical conflicts
6. Present an oral report on business related outside reading (see Appendix B)
7. Summarize articles from trade journals, newspapers, periodicals
8. Interview prominent people in community about communications problems in the workplace
9. Complete Preparation for the Scholastic Aptitude Tests practice materials

Methods of Instruction

1. Whole group instruction
2. Small group instruction and interaction
3. Individual word processing on computer
4. Shared inquiry approach to discussion

Evaluation

1. Completion of assigned homework and reading
2. Tests and Quizzes
3. Mid-Term and Final Exams
4. Portfolio, including:
   - Resume
   - Sample correspondence
   - Projects
   - Critique of outside reading

Materials

Student Texts:

Business English and Communications, 6th ed., by Marie M. Stewart, Kenneth Zimmer, and Lyn R. Clark, 1984.

Words! Words! Words! 2nd ed., by Norman Schachter, 1986.

Communication Skills for the Processing of Words, 3rd ed., by Rosanne Reiff, 1991.

Videos:

With Babies and Banners

Salt of the Earth

Norma Rae

Wall Street

Why Writing Is Important

Why Study English

Periodicals:

The Writing Notebook, 1991.

Making the Literature, Writing, Word Processing Connection: The Best of the Writing Notebook, 2nd ed., edited by Sharon Franklin, 1990.

Resource Texts:

Computer Writing Book by Dawn and Raymond J. Rodrigues, 1992.

Manual of Style for Business Letters, Memos and Reports, 4th ed., by Erwin M. Keithley and Marie M. Flatley, 1989.

Computer Hardware and Software

Appletalk Network--25 Apple IIgs student stations with file server; Appleworks Word Processing program, including spell checker; Write On! You are the Editor I and II

Recruiting

More than 60 students elected the course for the 1991-92 school year. (See Appendix D) This group was screened by both the English Department and the Business Education Department to determine whether the students met the necessary prerequisites. A final group of about 55 students were found to meet these requirements.

Planning the Project

More than 30 hours were spent in the planning of this curriculum. We have solicited the suggestions of the teachers in both the English and Business Education Departments.

COURSE OF STUDY
BUSINESS COMMUNICATIONS

BUSINESS EDUCATION DEPARTMENT

The students will spend one semester (two separate terms) with the Business Education teacher. The following is the course of study with the specific assignments which will be completed.

Term 1 (9 weeks)

During the first week individual passwords will be assigned and students will be taught to use the file server system. There will be a review of how to use both the software and hardware components of the system.

Term Assignments:

Students will keep a daily journal of short original entries about various topics related to reading, homework assignments, current events, etc. Entries will be made into the computer, saved, and printed weekly.

Students will keep a notebook for class notes.

Students will keep a portfolio--samples of their best work.

Students will complete a short report (2 to 3 pages) on a business topic of their choice. The report should have at least 3 quotations from outside reading. The report will be due at the end of the first term.

Spelling and Vocabulary--Classwork/Homework Assignments:

Text: Words! Words! Words!, by Norman Schachter

Prefixes	P. 1-12	Ex. 1a-1e
Adjectives	P. 13-16	Ex. 2a-2f
Attitude Words	P. 17-20	Ex. 3a-3f
Homonyms	P. 21-22	Ex. 4a-4d
How's Business	P. 23-28	Ex. 5a-5e
Anyone for a Job?	P. 29-32	Ex. 6a-6e
Legal Terms	P. 37-42	Ex. 8a-8f
The Sports Scene	P. 43-48	Ex. 9a-9h
TV's Soap Opera Talk	P. 49-50	Ex. 10a-10c
The Six O'Clock News	P. 51-52	Ex. 11a-11c
Money Talk	p. 53-56	Ex. 12a-12e
Popular Foreign Words	P. 57-60	Ex. 13a-13d

Punctuation--Classroom/Homework Assignments:

Text: Communication Skills for the Processing of Words

Unit 1--P. 1-7	Comma Rules (Practice exercises) Parenthetical Expressions Appositives Additional
P. 161	Memo format
P. 7	Key in Memo with correct commas
Unit 2--P. 9-11	Comma Rules (Practice exercises) Series Introductory Conjunction
P. 162-163	Report format
P. 14	Dictionary Usage
P. 15	Key in Report with corrections and punctuation
Unit 3--P. 17-21	Comma Rules; Semicolon Rules (Practice exercises) Coordinate Adjectives Nonrestrictive Clauses To replace conjunction Before conjunction in compound sentence
P. 160	Block Style Letter format
P. 22	Dictionary Usage
P. 23	Key in letter with corrections and punctuation
Unit 4--P. 25-29	Semicolon; Hyphens (Practice exercises) Before transitional word or phrase Between items in a series Compound adjective
P. 30	Dictionary Usage
P. 31	Key in Memo with corrections and punctuation

Unit 5/6--P. 33-42	Apostrophe (Practice exercises) Possession Contractions
P. 43	Dictionary Usage
P. 45	Key in letter with punctuation
P. 46	Key in report with punctuation

Unit 8--P. 55-59	Quotation Marks (Practice exercises) Direct quotes After independent clauses With other punctuation Titles
P. 60	Dictionary Usage
P. 60	Key in letter with punctuation

Computer Writing--Classwork Assignments:

Introduce the Writing Process:

Prewriting--brainstorming (at computer when possible)
Freewriting--developing ideas on paper and from keyboard
Editing/Revision--focus on content rather than mechanics; share writing with others
Proofreading--locate and correct errors; use of proofreader marks
Publishing--oral or printed presentation

Software: <u>You Are The Editor I and II</u> Exercises

D. Sentence Punctuation--punctuation and capitals
B. Letter--substitution words and phrases in sample letter; write an original letter
E. Replace--capitalization and punctuation
B. Clean-Up--proofreading
G. Paragraph--correct paragraphing
G. Tired Words--use substitute vocabulary
F. Run On--punctuation and capitals
H. Tricky Words--homonyms

Business Correspondence--Classwork/Homework Assignments:

Text: Business English and Communication by Marie M. Stewart, Kenneth Zimmer, and Lyn R. Clark

P. 320-327	Qualities of Effective Letters Introduce 10 guides for effective writing: 1. Plan messages carefully 2. Use a positive approach 3. Write from empathetic, considerate point of view 4. Message should be complete 5. Strive for clarity 6. Write in an efficient, action-oriented style 7. Use specific, concrete language 8. Use sentence structure effectively 9. Write effective paragraphs 10. Proofread and edit carefully
P. 327-329	Application Exercises A-D Vocabulary and Spelling Studies A-C
P. 389-401	Everyday Business Letters
P. 401-403	Application Exercises A-J
P. 403	Vocabulary and Spelling Studies A-C
P. 582-590	Employment Letters
P. 590-591	(Selected) Application Exercises A-G Key in letters on computer
P. 574-581	Resumes and Job Applications
P. 581	Application Exercise B--Prepare personal Resume Key in Resume on computer

Students will be allowed classroom time to key in their reports with title page and citation references.

Time will also be allowed for testing, discussion, field trips, speakers, etc.

Term 2 (9 weeks)

Term Assignments:

Students will each present an oral report--Allow 1 week for presentations

Telecommunications--Each student will do an assignment using the PRODIGY network data base; emphasis on using the network for research--allow 1 week since only one modem is available to access the PRODIGY data base

Students will write a one-page personal newsletter--if time permits, this project can be completed on the Macintosh computer using a desktop publishing software and printed on a laser printer--allow 1 week for completion on computer

Students will continue daily journal

Students will continue to keep notebook

Students will continue to keep portfolio

Spelling/Vocabulary--Classwork/Homework Assignments:

Cliches-Colloquialisms	P. 67-72	Ex. 16a-16g
Four-Letter Words	P. 61-64	Ex. 14a-14e
Two for the Price of One	P. 65-66	Ex. 15a-15b
Same and Opposite--Synonyms and Antonyms	P. 91-96	Ex. 22a-22h
Suffixes	P. 119-126	Ex. 28a-28i

Punctuation--Classwork/Homework Assignments:

Unit 12--P. 85-90	Capitalization (Practice exercises) Organizational terms Proper names Titles
P. 91	Dictionary Usage
P. 92	Key in letter with corrections
Unit 14/15--P. 103-119	Misused Words (Practice exercises)
P. 120	Dictionary Usage
P. 122	Key in report with corrections
Unit 16/17--P. 123-135	Troublesome Pronouns (Practice exercises)

Computer Writing--Classwork Assignments:

<u>You Are The Editor</u> Exercises

C. Mixed Up--proofreading
E. Deadwood--unnecessary words and phrases
I. Return--effective paragraphing
K. Finding Mistakes--finding misspelled names
L. Writing For Your Audience
L. Describe--supply describing words and phrases

Business Correspondence--Classwork/Homework Assignments:

P. 534-546 Qualities of Effective Speaking

P. 550-555 Giving a Talk

Students will be allowed classroom time to key in and complete computer projects.

Some time will also be allowed for testing, discussion, field trips, speakers, etc.

COURSE OF STUDY
BUSINESS COMMUNICATIONS

ENGLISH DEPARTMENT

The students will spend one semester (two separate terms) with the English teacher. The following is the course of study with the specific assignments which will be completed.

Term 1 (9 weeks)

Week 1: Orientation to class concept and procedures; course expectations and grading; outside reading requirements; and attention to students' assessments of their needs and expectations, as well as their outside job responsibilities.

Students will receive copies of THE RISE OF SILAS LAPHAM, which they will begin to read outside of class. They will keep a dialectic notebook in which they will note questions, concerns, ambiguities and responses to the reading. They will be asked to construct at least two questions to which they do not find an answer in each chapter and to note page numbers whenever it is appropriate for reference. They also will copy the sentence they feel is the most important for the message of each chapter. These will become the core for discussion later.

Reading rate: timed exercises; survey of articles from periodicals; adjusting rate to purpose; importance of comprehension.

Writing sample: spin-off from a current issue, i.e., hazardous waste disposal.

Week 2: Career inventory self assessment; exploration of career opportunities in the guidance resource center, and follow-up interviews with guidance counselors.

Week 3/4: Begin discussion of THE RISE OF SILAS LAPHAM using the shared inquiry approach; students continue reading. Discussion will include post Civil War industrialization, the rise of a billionaire and the social and ethical ramifications, relevance to the present, and daily writing geared to students' lives as well as the issues of the novel.

Week 5: "Wall Street" viewing, discussing and writing will address economics, pressures, and values identified with the stock market.

Student homework will include the reading of one book from the outside reading list and one interview of a person in business in the community. An outline of procedures will be given out.

Weeks 6/7: THE DEATH OF A SALESMAN. Students will read aloud, taking roles in the play. Issues addressed will include father-son relationships, ideas of success, human happiness, failure of friendships and suicide.

Week 8: "Salt of the Earth" video. Discussion and writing to address the plight of the immigrant, specifically Latinos; begin oral reports and panel discussions on outside reading and interviews. Possible guest speakers from the business community. Issues will focus on communications problems in the workplace.

Week 9: Continue oral reports and panels.

Time will be allowed to finish activities, for speakers, field trips, testing, etc.

Students will report to the Business Department for one term. When they return, students will continue with the following syllabus:

Term 2 (9 weeks)

Week 11/12: Students will receive copies of THE JUNGLE which they will read and take notes on as they did for ...SILAS LAPHAM.

In class, students will practice preparation for the SAT using sample tests and computer software concentrating on vocabulary in context and reading comprehension.

Week 13: "Norma Rae" video. Discussion will focus on environmental issues and concerns of business. Also included will be relevant women's issues. Begin second outside reading assignment which will be a collection of short readings on a current business related issue. Students will use a scrapbook format for a project, which will include their own reaction. Interviews may be included, but must be summarized.

Week 14/15: ALL MY SONS. Students will read aloud taking roles in the play. Discussion and writing will address the dynamics of a family caught up in business, war, deadlines, shortcuts, and ultimately, the consequences of their decisions.

Week 16/17: THE JUNGLE. Discussion and writing will focus on the need to raise consciousness about working conditions and the need to clean up food packing. Are these relevant issues today? Excerpts related to factories should be read aloud. Also of importance is the abuse and exploitation of the immigrant.

Week 18/19: Reading and writing in response to selected short stories taken from the following:

"Bartleby, the Scrivener" by Herman Melville
"The Customs and traditions of the Tobaqueros and what it was like to work in a cigar factory in New York City"by Bernardo Vega
"The Fat of the Land" by Anzia Yezierska
"The Organizer's Tale" by Cesar Chavez
"In the Land of the Free" by Sue Sin Far

These celebrate the multi-cultural opportunities and problems, and all except Bartleby are included in AMERICAN MOSAIC, Multi-cultural Readings in Context, Barbara Rico and Sandra Mano, ed., Houghton Mifflin Co., 1991. This text also includes poetry and selections from novels dealing with the immigrant experience.

Time will be allowed to finish activities, for review, and for testing.

APPENDIX A

STATE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

COMMON CORE OF LEARNING

ATTRIBUTES AND ATTITUDES

Self Concept
Motivation and Persistence
Responsibility and Self-Reliance
Intellectual Curiosity
Sense of Community
Moral and Ethical Values

SKILLS AND COMPETENCIES

Quantitative Skills
Reasoning and Problem Solving
Learning Skills
Reading
Writing
Speaking, Listening, and Viewing

UNDERSTANDINGS AND APPLICATIONS

The Arts
Career and Vocations
Cultures and Languages
History and Social Studies
Literature
Mathematics
Physical Development and Health
Science and Technology

APPENDIX B

SUMMER READING LIST

New Britain High School
Business Communications/American Literature

I. Choose one of the books from the attached reading list or any other novel or biography dealing with American business and submit a one-page review which includes the setting (time as well as place), the social and ethical concerns and any conclusions suggested. In other words, where did the story take place? What were the problems? Were there concerns about people? About right and wrong? How did it end? How does it relate to living today?

II. Summarize three articles from magazines or newspapers that deal with different problems facing the world of business. Tell about the problem, how it affects our lives and/or our world, and possible solutions.

APPENDIX C

BUSINESS COMMUNICATIONS

Reading List

Cahan, Abraham. The Rise of David Levinsky. New York: Harper and Row, 1917.

Ewing, David W. Inside Harvard Business School. New York: Times Books, 1990.

Iacocca, Lee and William Nowak. Iacocca: An Autobiography. New York: Bantam, 1986.

Love, John F. McDonald's: Behind the Arches. New York: Bantam, 1986.

McCormack, Mark H. What They Don't Teach You at Harvard Business School: Notes from a Street Smart Executive. New York: Bantam, 1985.

Naisbitt, John and Patricia Aburdene. Megatrends 2000. New York: Avon Books, 1990.

Rogers, Buck. The IBM Way: Insights into the World's Most Successful Marketing Organization. New York: Harper Row, 1987.

Rose, Tom. How to Succeed in Business. New York: AEP, 1975.

Seglin, Jeffrey L. America's New Breed of Entrepreneurs: Their Marketing Strategies and Success. Washington, D.C.: Acropolis, 1985.

Sobel, Robert and David Sicilia. The Entrepreneurs: An American Adventure. Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1986.

Steinbeck, John. Grapes of Wrath. New York: Penguin, 1976.

Sterner, Jerry. Other People's Money. New York: Applause Theater Book Publishers, 1989.

Wang, An and Eugene Linden. Lessons: An Autobiography. New York: Addison Wesley, 1988.

Watson, Thomas J., Jr., and Peter Petre. Father, Son and Co. New York: Bantam, 1990.

APPENDIX D

COURSE DESCRIPTION

The following course description was published in the New Britain High School Course of Studies booklet for 1991-92.

In the English Department section:

BUSINESS COMMUNICATIONS/AMERICAN LITERATURE Level I 1 Credit
Grades 11, 12
(This course receives either English or Business credit. Students electing Business credit must select another English course.)
Prerequisite: One year of prior formal keyboard training.

Cross-credit offering with Business Department.
Students will alternate between composing a variety of business communications using state-of-the-art word processing and telecommunications equipment in the Business Department and reading a variety of genres in American literature dealing with the world of business in the English Department. Formal reports as well as informal reaction papers on the literature will be required. The course will feature project oriented tasks and representatives from the business community. (See Business Department description)

In the Business Education Department section:

BUSINESS COMMUNICATIONS/AMERICAN LITERATURE Level I 1 Credit
Grades 11, 12
(This course receives either English credit or Business credit. If taken for Business credit, student must select another English course.)
Prerequisite: One year of prior formal keyboard training.

Cross-credit offering with English Department. Student will develop writing skills necessary for a business career and everyday usage. Concentration on business vocabulary, spelling, punctuation, grammar, sentence construction, composing various correspondence and reports. Develop decision making skills through use of computer for word processing of assignments. (See English Department description)